

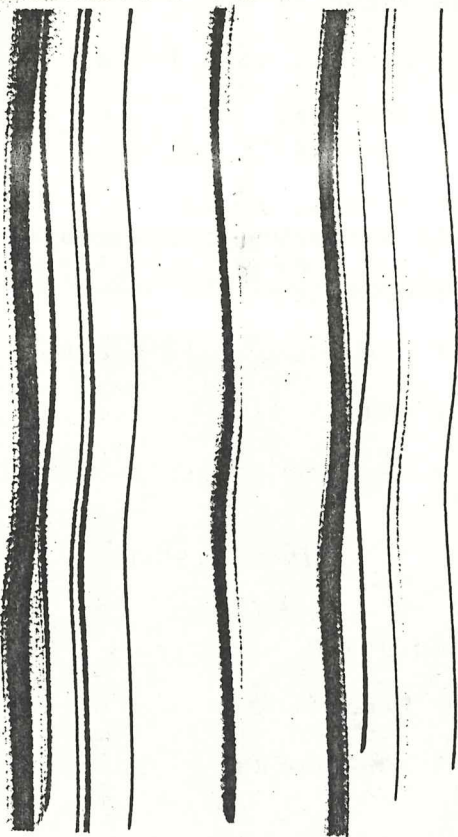
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T R O M B O N E



T H E A T R I C S

guest artist

STUART DEMPSTER USA

TREMBLAY

BERIO

ERICKSON

SCHOENBERG

SUNDAY APRIL 23 8:00 PM

PREMIERE DANCE THEATRE, HARBOURFRONT

PROGRAM

GILLES TREMBLAY

Envol
(1984)

Robert Aitken, solo flute

GILLES TREMBLAY

...Le sifflement
des vents porteurs de l'amour
(1971)

Robert Aitken, flute

Russell Hartenberger, percussion

STUART DEMPSTER

Monty
(1979)

Stuart Dempster, solo trombone

ROBERT ERICKSON

General Speech
(1969)

Stuart Dempster, solo trombone

INTERMISSION

LUCIANO BERIO

Sequenza V
(1966)

Stuart Dempster, solo trombone

ARNOLD SCHOENBERG

Kammersymphonie
(1906)

Douglas Stewart

flute, piccolo

Cynthia Steljes

oboe

Lesley Young

English horn

Dick Thompson

E♭ clarinet

Stan McCartney

A clarinet

Robert Stevenson

bass clarinet

Peter Lutek

bassoon

Steve Braunstein

contrabassoon

Joan Watson

French horn

Richard Cohen

French horn

Fujiko Imajishi

violin

Carol Fujino

violin

Kent Teeple

viola

David Hetherington

cello

Roberto Occhipinti

double bass

Robert Aitken

conductor

Production Manager Jean-Paul Langeloh

trombone theatrics



DEMPSTER

Stuart Dempster, born in Berkeley, California in 1936, studied performance and composition at San Francisco State College. From 1962-66 he was principal trombone in the Oakland Symphony under Gerhard Samuel and, since 1968, has been on the faculty of the University of Washington. A list of his accomplishments includes: being a Fulbright scholar in Australia (where he studied the aboriginal didjeridu), 1973; receiving a Guggenheim Fellowship (1981); and the publication of his book The Modern Trombone: A Definition of Its Idioms, by the University of California Press in 1979.

Mr. Dempster is known primarily for his commissioning of new works for the trombone. He is a leading figure in the research and performance of older works for this instrument, particularly the American music of the turn of the century as exemplified by Arthur Pryor. His tours consist of performances of his own works, as well as commissioned works by Berio, Donald Erb, Robert Erickson, Ernst Krenek, and others. Dempster's album, "...In the Great Abbey of Clement VI" was recorded with Dempster sitting on the floor of the abbey of the papal palace in Avignon, creating his improvised Standing Waves by using the walls' reverberation time of approximately fourteen seconds.

His continued work with resonance resulted in the birth of "singing audience" pieces, such as ...On the Boards, featuring didjeridu and large singing audience. As a natural outgrowth, Dempster's interest in therapeutic music and the positive attributes of meditation and humor can be seen in Didjeriatsu, Acuhosery, and Aura Fluff. These pieces appear in Sound Massage Parlour; well over fifty sessions of this were given during the 1986 premiere, including seventeen in Houston at New Music America.

Stuart Dempster's unique approach is admired by Tom Johnson of the Village Voice: "(the) interesting thing about Dempster is that he is hard to categorize either as a performer or a composer. It seems that everything he does involves quite a bit of creative responsibility. Yet he seldom, if ever, claims sole authorship of his material. This is an unusual way to approach music, but a useful one, probably related to the whole problem of taking instruments across cultural barriers. It would

be risky, for example, for American musicians to attempt to perform really authentic didjeridu music, and I doubt that I'd understand it if they did. On the other hand, if one insisted on composing completely original didjeridu music, without making use of its highly developed traditional techniques, the result would probably sound naive. Dempster's compromise makes a great deal of sense to me."

Monty — solo trombone

This piece was composed specially for a concert at the Montgomery Chapel in San Anselmo, California. MONTY is a dedication to Monty West, a Seattle-based anthropologist, who aided Mr. Dempster in his development of didjeridu technique. The climax of the piece is reached when the didjeridu technique is in complete interaction with the water that has collected in the instrument and, indeed, the piece ends abruptly when it is no longer possible to continue playing.

Stuart Dempster



Kurt Schwertsik

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ERICKSON

The American composer Robert Erickson is articulate both in words and music; he has written several articles and published his book The Structure of Music: A Listener's Guide to Melody and Counterpoint (1955) to explain his compositional processes.

He met his principal teacher, Ernst Krenek, in 1936, and during the next 20 years focussed on combining atonality with a "rather rigorous imitative counterpoint" (his description). After 1957, Erickson's interests turned to timbre and rhythmic experiments, as outlined in his 1963 "Time Relations" article:

I wanted a quality of motion less tempo-bound than what I had previously composed. I had always used accelerando and ritardando in my music to ameliorate the 'tickiness' of a rigidly held unit and to help establish the fluidity of motion which I wanted; ...I hit upon the compositional idea of combining certain musical events in disjunct but commensurable tempos, which sometimes would integrate with each other without any single tempo dominating, and at other times would be connected by means of accelerando and ritardando.

Erickson has also worked with tape at the urging of his students Pauline Oliveros and Ramon Sender, as well as vocal and speech sounds, exemplified in tonight's performance of "General Speech". His academic career has included teaching at St. Catherine College in St. Paul, the San Francisco Conservatory, and the University of California at San Diego (since 1966).

General Speech — *solo trombone*

(commissioned by Stuart Dempster)

The composer provides the following notes: "The sounds of one language are often difficult to describe in terms of the categories used for describing another; and the more one looks at the languages of the world, the more one seems to have to increase the number of phonetic categories required for making adequate descriptions. Whether this is so or not depends in part on what one means by making an adequate phonetic description..."

"We may now consider the general form of the kind of phonetic description that is being proposed here. It must, like other parts of the description of a language, be capable of being expressed completely in a set of explicit statements or rules, so that we can be sure that no intuitive (possible fallacious) concepts are required for its interpretation. Ultimately, it would be convenient if the rules produced a set of signals which could control a speech synthesizer. Then we could be certain that the entire account of a language was contained in the rules and the theory (which would have to include a specification of the speech synthesizer). Such a description could, in a very literal sense, be part of a generative grammar; the grammar would be very powerful in that it would contain rules which were not merely possible (specifying correct but not necessarily all the phonetic correlates) but necessary and sufficient (containing all and only the information required to generate speech)."

BERIO

Luciano Berio is a familiar musical figure to New Music Concerts' audiences. This organization inaugurated its first season with a program of his music, and ten years later invited him to return for its' anniversary program. A very prolific composer, Berio's music ranges from pure music to theatrical works and many pieces employing technology.

Berio comes from a family of musicians and first studied music with his father, an organist and composer. He graduated from the Music Academy in Milan in 1951, where he had studied composition with Giorgio Ghedini and Giulio Paribeni. In 1951 he studied serial techniques with Luigi Dallapiccola at Tanglewood. In 1955 he and Bruno Maderna founded the electronic Studio di Fonologia at the Italian Radio in Milan, where Berio remained until 1961. In 1958 he began his association with the summer courses at Darmstadt, where many of his works have been performed. In 1962 he moved to the United States where he taught composition at the Julliard school.

Berio's music is significant not only because of its expert use of modern-day musical techniques -- which embrace both the orchestral instruments known in the nineteenth century and every sort of sound electronically produced or not, which composers have added to the standard musical forces -- but because in his work, Berio has never forgotten the audience. Although many of his larger-scaled works involve an almost bewildering array of musical approaches and styles, all of his music has a direct dramatic appeal. This emphasis on drama is entirely in keeping with the operatic heritage of his native country.

In February of this year, The Royal Academy of Music (London, England) staged a 3-day festival devoted to the works and influence of this internationally acclaimed composer, including a new production of his opera "Un re in ascolto" (A king listens).

Berio has been associated with the famed musical research centre in Paris, IRCAM, and today he resides and works in the country of his origin, Italy.

Sequenza V — solo trombone

Sequenza V was commissioned by Stuart Dempster and first performed by him in San Francisco on March 21, 1966. Berio's own program note on the work is characteristically elusive as well as allusive:

"Behind 'Sequenza III' and 'Sequenza V' lurks the memory of Grock, the last great clown, Grock was my neighbour. He lived in a strange and complicated villa up the hill, surrounded by a kind of Oriental garden with small pagodas, streams, bridges and willow trees. Many times, with my schoolmates, I climbed a high iron fence to steal oranges and tangerines from his garden. During my childhood the closeness, the excessive familiarity with his name and the indifference of the adults around me, prevented me from realizing his genius. It was only later, when I was perhaps eleven, that I saw him perform on the stage of Teatro Cavour in Porto Maurizio and I understood him. Like everyone else in the audience I didn't know whether I should laugh or cry and wanted to do both. After that experience I stole no more oranges from his garden."

TREMBLAY

Gilles Tremblay was born on September 6, 1932 in Arvida, Québec. His first studies were private lessons principally with Jocelyne Binet, Edmond Trudel and Gabriel Cusson. From 1949 to 1954, he studied piano at the Montreal Conservatory with Germaine Malepart, winning premier prix for piano in 1953. During the same period he was taking private composition lessons with Claude Champagne.

He then took the famous analysis course of Messaien in Paris, winning a premiere prix there in 1957. The following year he was awarded the Premiere Medaille in ondes Martenot, at the Conservatory as well as a "licence" in counterpoint from the Ecole Normale Supérieure de Musique.

During his time in Europe, encounters with other composers became more frequent. He made the acquaintance of Stockhausen in Darmstadt. In 1959 he spent a period at the ORTF in Paris with the Groupe de Recherches Musicales under the direction of Pierre Schaeffer and there met Amy, Boucourechliev, Ferrari, Mache and Xenakis. In 1960, a scholarship enabled him to take summer courses, once again in Darmstadt, with Pierre Boulez and Henri Pousseur.

During the 1960's Tremblay was, successively, a teacher, a lecturer, and host of the radio show Festivals. It was during this period as well that he began to prove himself as a composer.

In 1966-67 he worked on sound tracks for the Québec Pavilion at Expo 67, and his work won him the Calixa Lavallée prize. In 1972 he won a Canada Council award and was able to travel to the Far East. He has been an adjudicator for many international competitions and his works have been performed in Montreal, Toronto, Paris, London, New York, Tokyo and other cities.

Tremblay's work exhibits a remarkable continuity in its concern for

research. Defining some of his terminology helps in visualizing his musical world. Certain parts of a work will be designated "en mobile". Notes blockframed in the score determine the pitches the musician may use, but he or she may choose the order in which these notes will be played.

In structuring periods of time in a indefinite mode, Tremblay uses duration-breath, duration-resonances and duration-arcs. These different forms of duration constitute moments of "broadening", so to speak, of the sound texture.

Currently a professor at the Conservatoire de Musique de la Province de Québec in Montréal, the enticing music of this fascinating composer has been widely acclaimed in France and Canada.

Envol — flute solo :

Envol, subtitled "Alléluia pour flûte seule", was written in 1984 for Tremblay's son, Jean-François. It was used as a prologue to the Vespers for the virgin, about which Tremblay says:

"(It) was a work commissioned for the eight hundred and fiftieth anniversary of the foundation of the Abbey of Our Lady of Sylvanès. These circumstances then shaped the composition, destined as it was for an architecture with exceptional acoustic qualities. The work is written for a mixed choir soprano solo and thirteen instrumentalists. It is dedicated to the Dominican Andre Gouzes and to the friends of Sylvanès who, continuing in the tradition of its architects, make of it a living echo.

"In the liturgy of the Canonical hours the vespers correspond to sunset. This shows us then the symbolic importance of light (likened to Christ). A prominent position has therefore been given to the evocation of this outstanding feature, all the more so as it is a question of Vespers for the Virgin, "...a woman clothed with the sun..." (Apocalypse 12 verse 1)."

Envol was inspired by some of the Gregorian neumes, and by the astonishing acoustics of the Abbey, to which Tremblay remarks the piece has been "tuned".

The seven short sections are as follows:

- I thrown-out sounds
- II superabundance I
- III streaming I
- IV superabundance II
- V streaming II
- VI superabundance III
- VII lyrical chant in large rotations

The name Envol, meaning flight, is taken from the melodic dynamism throughout the work.

...Le sifflement des vents porteurs de l'amour — *flute & percussion*

The title, "...The Whistling of the Winds Bearers of Love..." is a quotation from the Spritual Canticle XIV by St. John of the Cross.

The theme of this work is wind, physically and spiritually (pneuma, spiritus). Its' presence forms the music -- breath, through the presence of silence: frozen states, fringes of existence, warmth that melts and fertilizes in multiplied and endless plays and possibilities ("...bearers of love...").

In addition to this verse, two "presences" must be mentioned -- the winter (moment of composition) and the fascinating idea of the first moment of the Resurrection (see the melodies of the Resurrexi and of the Alleluia of Easter in plainchant).

The experiments, especially with the various pitches of the flute's "whistle tones", were particularly stimulating and useful. The work is dedicated to my mother, and also to the musicians who gave the premiere, Robert Cram, flute and Ian Bernard, percussion.

Gilles Tremblay

SCHOENBERG

(1874-1951)

Arnold Schoenberg learned to play the violin and cello while a youth and almost immediately began composing pieces for these instruments. In 1894 he had his only formal composition lessons, counterpoint with Alexander von Zemlinsky. He moved to Berlin in 1901, where a year later, through the influence of Richard Strauss, he obtained the Liszt stipend and a teaching position at the Stern Conservatory. Returning to Vienna in 1903, he joined an artistic circle around Gustav Mahler. As performances of his works increased, he attracted a group of gifted students, among whom were Alban Berg, Egon Wellesz, and Anton Webern. In 1910 he became a teacher of composition at the Vienna Academy, and the following year published his harmony text, Harmonielehre.

The following years produced radical advances in Schoenberg's style and saw more performances of his works throughout Europe. In 1918, as a result of critical attacks, he organized the Society for Private Musical Performances in Vienna; critics were excluded, programs were not announced in advance, and applause was forbidden. In 1921, Schoenberg introduced one last radical innovation, the 12-tone technique. As important in its own way as the use of atonality, this technique offered the composer an organized approach to the writing of atonal music.

In 1925 Schoenberg began teaching again at Berlin, this time at the Prussian Academy of Arts. He was dismissed from his position in 1933 by the Nazi-dominated ministry of education, and he emigrated to the U.S. He settled in Hollywood and from 1936 taught at the University of California at Los Angeles.

Kammersymphonie — *chamber ensemble*

(note by Gunther Schuller)

This work stems from that fascinating period during the first decade of the twentieth century which saw the final breakdown of the old language, tonality, and the first stirrings of a new musical language called "atonality". While looking variously both forward into the future and backward toward the "romantic" nineteenth century, the work hovers on that borderline of tonality and atonality which signified the breakdown of the diatonic concept, the breakdown of symmetry in form and musical elements which had governed musical creation for centuries.

The Chamber Symphony is complex in language and form, intense in expression, polyphonically dense in texture, and typically concentrated, thus placing considerable demands on both the performer and listener. Consider, for example, its form, a sprawling sonata-form movement expanded virtually to the point of breaking its bounds. In this there is a direct analogy to the work's harmonic/melodic language which is also so expanded and extended that its identification with diatonic tonality is at best tenuous, and frequently difficult to demonstrate at all. Indeed, the harmonic language is of three sorts, all happily commingling in a manner that must have utterly bewildered the symphony's first listeners. The three components of this harmonic language are 1) traditional diatonic usages, although in their most advanced "chromatic" guise, 2) quartal harmonies, i.e. harmonies built on the interval of the fourth (rather than thirds as in triadic harmony), and 3) whole-tone harmonies. There is no clear order

of priority for any one of these harmonic "systems"; Schoenberg uses them variously and almost arbitrarily. Indeed, he soon abandoned all three concepts in favor of atonality. Thus, the Chamber Symphony can be seen as either a last attempt to manoeuvre around within the extended boundaries of tonal centers, or -- as the other side of the same coin -- the first stage of the break-up of tonality by destroying the primacy of the major-minor triad and allowing as co-equals chords built on major thirds only (whole-tone, augmented chords) or perfect fourths.

All of this is embodied, almost as if in a prefatory motto, in the opening dozen measures of the work. The initial quartal harmonies resolve to a pure major triad; the horn reaffirms the quartal ideas in its ascending theme of "stormy jubilation," to which the ensemble responds in a whole-tone progression, immediately extended by the ensuing E-major cello theme. The entire rest of the work represents a gigantic elaboration of these three harmonic elements through its variegated thematic and motivic material.

These are of necessity variegated because the sprawling form of the work simply demands it. Like the sextet "Verklarte Nacht", the D-minor String Quartet, and the narrative "tone poems" "Pelleas and Melisande" and "Gurrelieder" -- all early Schoenberg works -- the Chamber Symphony is in one movement. More accurately, it is a five-movement symphony superimposed onto the sonata-form structure: I--Exposition, II--Scherzo, III--Development, IV--Slow movement, V--Recapitulation and Finale. In Schoenberg's concept of forms encapsulized within forms, even the exposition section has its own

microscopic sonata sequence replete with second subject, transitions and recapitulation and the Finale has a Coda within a larger Coda. From the point of view of the Symphony's large-scale continuity, the Scherzo and Slow Movement are interpolations, separated by the Development Section. Thus, the piece can be heard on several structural levels; not an easy task.

Schoenberg's "Kammersymphonie" shows how rapidly things progressed in those early years of our century. In three short years, 1906 to 1909, Schoenberg and his pupils moved from at least a nominal adherence to tonality to the free pantonality of Webern. We know now that these were crucial and seminal years, ones which irrevocably altered the face and language of music in our time.

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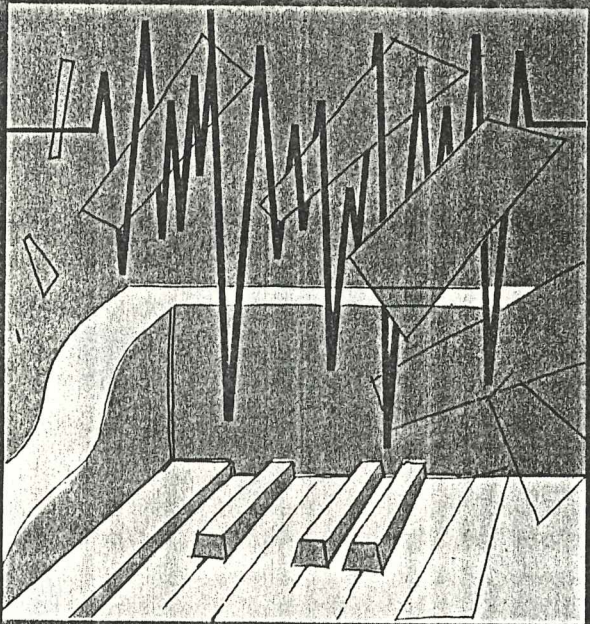
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